



Millers River Chapter of Trout Unlimited Newsletter

DECEMBER 2006

Officers

- President – Pat Higgins
- Vice President – Charlie Fredette
- Treasurer – Eddie Atter
- Secretary – Open

Board of Directors

- Don Barnes
- Ken Elmer
- Paul Fischer
- Rodney Flagg
- Kim Gifford
- Bill Manser
- John O'Loughlin
- Matthew Penttila
- Brian Tanguay

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TU CHAPTER 725 MONTHLY MEETING

December 20, 2006, 7:00 P.M.

Millers River Environmental Center
Athol, MA

Guest Speaker - Andy Bonzagni of Concord Outfitters

Ready for something different? Andy Bonzagni of Concord Outfitters in Concord, MA will be our presenter. Andy will be speaking about Bonefishing in the Bahamas. Andy is an accomplished fly angler and has led several trips to the Bahamas as well as to the Kootenai River in Montana. Please join us for a very informative and fun evening in December.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At our annual meeting last month, the following members were elected:

Pat Higgins – President

Charlie Fredette – Vice President

Don Barnes – BOD

Paul Fischer – BOD

Kim Gifford - BOD

John O'Loughlin – BOD

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As 2006 comes to a close, it's a convenient time to look back, evaluate our efforts, decide what was good, what was bad, and make plans for the future. The Millers River Chapter Board of Directors has been doing just that if you missed last month's annual business meeting, you missed much of the results of those efforts.

First the good, and the list of accomplishments is significant ...

- We completed our first round of tying classes at Mount Wachusett Community College.
- We were able to financially support conservation organizations such as the North East Wilderness Trust and their efforts in the headwaters of the Millers.
- We worked with a couple Scout organizations to introduce fly fishing to area youth.
- We have increased our interaction with the Millers River Environmental Center through participation in the stream sampling project.
- We organized the construction and installation of the informational kiosk in the Bearsden area.
- Continued Brown Trout Stocking in the Bearsden
- Continued Salmon Fry stocking of the River.
- Chapter membership increased by 20%.

All very good accomplishments that have helped us grow as a Chapter.

Well, if we said that everything was an astounding success, we'd be lying to ourselves! As might be expected, our fundraising efforts continue to be a challenge and fell short of what was hoped. We were able to tread water but that's about all. Needless to say, our ability to have successful years like 2006 is inescapably tied to our ability to raise the funds to support these efforts. In an effort to reduce the burden to our membership, we're cutting back to a single fundraising banquet and we'll focus our efforts on trade shows. Our Chapter will have a presence at the Marlboro, Worcester and Springfield shows this year. If you'd like to help draw awareness to the Millers River and Trout Unlimited efforts through these shows, please let us know. We could use your help!

So, congratulations to all on a very successful 2006. We have solid plans moving forward and expect 2007 to be even more successful. Hope everyone has a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

WHAT FLY?

So, I know this happens to everyone... you're thinking of getting out to fish the river but haven't been in a while. Joe Blow was just there so you ask him what's happening. The question that inevitably comes up is, "What fly?" Well, we all have our 'go to' flies but what flies do you never leave home without? I know this will open some disagreements but, for me, here are the flies that you can't be caught without on the Millers...

Beadhead Black Wooly Bugger – This works so well I get sick and tired of using it. Drifted like a nymph of stripped like a streamer, this fly takes fish!

The 'Gotcha' – From past president, Jim Foley. Very simple tie: Gold beadhead with a dark hare's ear Ligas body. That's it but can be deadly. Use through June but then put it away until next year.

Partridge and Orange or Hare's Ear Wetfly - I'll tie these on when nothing is going on up top. Cast out and let it swing around below you. I get more fish on the swing than anywhere else.

Elk Hair Caddis – The Millers has great caddis hatches. You need these with tan, olive and peacock bodies. Dead drifted or skittered across the top a killer pattern.

Lafontaine Sparkle Pupa – I use the emerger pattern in tan and caddis green. If the fish are coming out of the water, tie on of these on. As often as not, they're chasing caddis.

Royal Trude – Great searching top water fly. Easy to see, one of my go-to flies!

Stimulator – In late June when you walk out on the rocks and see them covered with stonefly cases, pull this out. It can provide some great topwater action.

Chernobyl Ant – Summertime, occasional surface activity with no particular hatch happening, this can be the trick. Tweak it a few times to get the legs twitching. Great strikes!

Moby Dick – Kind of a new fly to me but I needed a token streamer in the box. Have done well with the brown's with this at times.

Parachute Adams – Great general dry fly. Don't leave home without it.

Parachute Cahill – When the light flies are hatching, you have to have something they'll eat. This is what I use.

So, let the debates begin. What are your favorites?

THE GIFT OF FLY FISHING

Here at the holiday season, I am suggesting you give someone else the gift of fly fishing. Perhaps someone dear to you was a fly fisher years ago - before babies, a house with a mortgage and new carpeting. Encourage that person to get back into fly-fishing.

Or maybe you have a fishing friend who hasn't yet been exposed to fly fishing. Fly fishing delivers the satisfaction of not just catching, but the enjoyment of casting. Fly-fishing is the perfect way to get the person who had an interest in the outdoors back outdoors.

Don't panic. I'm not suggesting you go out and buy a rod, reel or such. You won't have a clue on those items (unless you have been presented with a "What I Want for Christmas" list). Here are some ideas to consider.

Get a couple of books about fly-fishing. These books fall into two basic groups - "how to" and "why to." Pick something from the "why to" group. The following are in that group, and should be available at your local book dealer or fly shop.

Ted Leeson's *Habit of Rivers*, Seth Norman's *Meanderings*, the classic *A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean (or if you loved the film, pick up the video *Shadow Casting* which is an on-location piece on the making of the movie).

Other great choices are *Anatomy of a Fisherman* or either of Robert Travers' other two fly-fishing books. Howell Raines *Fly Fishing Through the Midlife Crisis* is probably misnamed, but it will invoke memories in any angler. Anything by Jerry Dennis is a personal favorite of mine.

Humor is where you find it, and *Another Lousy Day in Paradise* by John Gierach is a delight.

The message you will be giving to the recipient is that you care. And hope they will get out, smell the roses, and reduce his or her personal stress. A gift of fly fishing is not a small thing. It's what memories are made of. And who knows, you just might get a terrific fishing buddy.

Mark Your Calendars! Fly Tying is back.

Once again, the Millers River Chapter will be offering Fly Tying classes at Mount Wachusett Community College.

- 5 Week *Beginners Course*: Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:30, 1/18/07 – 2/15/07
- 6 Week *Advanced Course*: Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:30, 3/1/07 – 4/12/07
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Registration will be through the College. Watch for your MWCC catalog or we'll post info on www.millersrivertu.org as available.



